

REMARKS

The Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the subject application, as amended. Claims 1 – 50 remain in the application. Claims 3, 8, 12, 14 – 21, 22 – 24, 27, 37, 42, and 46 have been amended. No claims have been canceled. Claims 48 – 50 have been added.

Applicant has received a copy of the form 1449A originally filed with the application on April 16, 2001, but the single reference on the IDS has not been initialed. The Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner initial the reference.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 3, 8, 12, 42, and 46 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicants regard as the invention. Claims 3, 8, 12, 42, and 46 have been amended as requested in the Office Action.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-31 and 35-47 were “rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Czerwieg, et al 5,161,152 in view of Doss et al. 6,389,013.

Applicant respectfully asserts that the combination of Czerwieg ‘152 and Doss ‘013 does not describe or suggest Applicant’s claimed invention. Applicant’s independent claims 1, 6, 10, 14, 20, 35, 40 and 44 include “sync hunting.” In combining Czerwieg ‘152 with Doss ‘013, the Office Action relies on the incorrect assumption that Czerwieg ‘152 describes “sync hunting”. Actually, Czerwieg ‘152 never discusses “sync hunting.”

The term “synchronous” is found in some of the citations relied on by the Office Action, but the term “synchronous” is used to describe “transmission lines”, not “sync hunting”(which is an abbreviated form of synchronization hunting not synchronous hunting). While the combination of Czerwieg '152 and Doss '013 discusses the receipt of synchronous signals by a network device, it does not explain how sync hunting is performed in that

network device. Instead, Czerwiec '152 describes "an interface between high speed transmission lines (whether they be OC1 lines or electrical STS1 lines), low speed DS1 lines and individual DS0 subscriber lines" (col. 7, lines 48 – 53), and Doss '013 describes "a back up communications link for control messages" (Abstract).

The combination of Czerwiec '152 and Doss '013 may result in a network device with a time slot interchange between a high speed interface and a low speed interface, and a back up communications link for control messages, but the cited references do not focus on sync hunting and do not discuss a manner of performing sync hunting. Therefore, they cannot teach or suggest Applicant's claimed manner of performing sync hunting.

In addition, Applicant respectfully traverses all 35 U.S.C. §103 rejections made with respect to the dependent claims. Applicant asserts that all dependent claims of the application are dependent on one of the above allowable independent claims.

Applicant reserves the right to swear behind either of the cited references and reserves the right to disagree with the combination of the cited references.

Amendments to claims 14 – 24, 27, 37 and Specification

Applicant has amended claims 14 – 24, 27, and 37. These amendments have not been made to overcome rejections of the Office Action. Applicant has also made amendments to the specification correcting typographical and labeling errors and submits that no new matter has been added.

Notice of Other Pending Applications

The Applicant wants to put the Examiner on notice that there are other pending applications with the same specification as the above captioned application. The U.S. Patent Application with serial number 09/835,474 entitled "Method and Apparatus for Synchronization Hunting" filed on April 16, 2001 and the U.S. Patent Application with serial number 09/835,704 entitled "Method and Apparatus for Deframing Signals" filed on April 16, 2001, both have the same specification as the above captioned patent application.

Drawing Corrections

Applicant has made changes to the drawings in red. Applicant submits these changes on separate paper to the Examiner for approval.

Conclusion

Applicant respectfully submits that in view of the amendments and remarks herein, claims 1 – 31 and 35 - 47 are now in condition for allowance, in addition to claims 32 – 34 previously allowed by the Examiner. Applicant respectfully submits that the Claims as amended are novel, and nonobvious over the cited prior art for the above reasons and are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests the rejections be withdrawn and the Claims be allowed. It is believed that no further fee is due with this amendment and response, however, should a further fee be due, or a credit appropriate, please charge Deposit Account No. 02-2666.

Respectfully submitted,

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

In the Specification:

A specification with markings to show changes is attached.

In the Claims:

Claims 48 - 50 have been added.

Please amend the claims as indicated below.

1 3. (Once Amended) The machine-readable medium of claim 1 wherein the sync hunting
2 includes updating a first and second set of states indicated by the first and second subset of
3 the set of per-alignment state machines and writing the updated first set of states to the first
4 subset of per-alignment state machines and the updated second set of states to the second
5 subset of per-alignment state machines.

1 8. (Once Amended) The machine-readable medium of claim 6 wherein the sync hunting
2 includes updating the first and second set of states and writing the updated first set of states
3 to the first subset of per-alignment state machines and the updated second set of states to the
4 second subset of per-alignment state machines.

1 12. (Once Amended) The machine-readable medium of claim 10 wherein the sync hunting
2 includes updating the first and second set of states and writing the updated first set of states
3 to the first subset of per-alignment state machines and the updated second set of states to the
4 second subset of per-alignment state machines.

1 14. (Once Amended) An apparatus comprising:
2 a first sync hunt logic to sync hunt a first signal;
3 a second sync hunt logic to sync hunt a second signal;
4 a memory controller coupled to-with the first and second sync hunt logics, the
5 memory controller to perform read and write operations between the first and
6 second sync hunt logics and a memory unit; and
7 the a memory unit coupled to-with the memory controller, the memory unit to store a
8 set of per-alignment state machines.

1 15. (Once Amended) The apparatus of claim 14 wherein the first and second sync hunt
2 logics are for a first and second signal format, respectively.

1 16. (Once Amended) The apparatus of claim 14 wherein the first sync hunt logic includes:
2 a read buffer coupled to the memory controller, the read buffer to buffer a first set of
3 states written by the memory controller; and
4 a write buffer coupled to the memory controller, the write buffer to buffer a second set
5 of states output from the first logic.

1 17. (Once Amended) The apparatus of claim 14 wherein the second sync hunt logic
2 includes:
3 a read buffer coupled to the memory controller, the read buffer to buffer a first set of
4 states written by the memory controller; and
5 a write buffer coupled to the memory controller, the write buffer to buffer a second set
6 of states output from the second logic.

1 18. (Once Amended) The apparatus of claim 14 further comprising:
2 a write buffer coupled to the first and second sync hunt logics and the memory
3 controller, the write buffer to buffer a first set of states written by the memory
4 controller; and
5 a read buffer coupled to the first and second sync hunt logics and the memory
6 controller, the read buffer to buffer a second set of states, the second set of
7 states written to the read buffer by the first and second logic.

1 19. (Once Amended) The apparatus of claim 14 further comprising:
2 the first sync hunt logic to update a first set of states from the memory unit;
3 the second sync hunt logic to update a second set of states from the memory unit;
4 a first buffering unit coupled to the memory controller and the first sync hunt logic,
5 the first buffering unit to buffer the first set of states written from the memory
6 unit by the memory controller and to buffer the updated first set of states from
7 the first sync hunt logic; and
8 a second buffering unit coupled to the memory controller and the second sync hunt
9 logic, the second buffering unit to buffer the second set of states written from
10 the memory unit by the memory controller and to buffer the updated second
11 set of states from the second sync hunt logic.

1 20. (Once Amended) An apparatus comprising:
2 an memory unit to store a set of per-alignment state machines;
3 a memory controller coupled to-with the memory unit, the memory controller to
4 perform read and write operations to-between the memory unit and a plurality
5 of sync hunt logic; and

6 thea plurality of sync hunt logic coupled to-with the memory controller, the plurality
7 of sync hunt logic to simultaneously perform sync hunting for a plurality of
8 signals with the set of per-alignment state machines.

1 21. (Once Amended) The apparatus of claim 20 wherein the plurality of signals have
2 different formatting.

1 22. (Once Amended) The apparatus of claim 20 wherein each of the plurality of sync hunt
2 logic includes:

3 a read buffer coupled to-with the memory controller, the read buffer to buffer a first
4 set of states written by the memory controller; and
5 a write buffer coupled to-with the memory controller, the write buffer to buffer a
6 second set of states to be written to the memory unit by the memory controller.

1 23. (Once Amended) The apparatus of claim 20 further comprising:

2 a write buffer coupled to-with the plurality of logic and the memory controller, the
3 write buffer to buffer a first set of states written by the memory controller; and
4 a read buffer coupled to-with the plurality of logic and the memory controller, the read
5 buffer to buffer a second set of states, the second set of states written to the
6 read buffer by the plurality of sync hunt logic.

1 24. (Once Amended) The apparatus of claim 20 further comprising:

2 the plurality of sync hunt logic to update a set of states from the memory unit; and
3 a buffering unit coupled to-with the memory controller and the plurality of logic, the
4 buffering unit to buffer the set of states written from the memory unit by the

5 memory controller and to buffer the updated set of states from the plurality of
6 sync hunt logic.

1 27. (Once Amended) The apparatus of claim 25 wherein the first deframing slice includes a
2 first sync hunt logic for a first signal format and a second sync hunt logic for a second signal
3 format.

1 37. (Once Amended) The computer implemented method of claim 35 wherein the sync
2 hunting includes updating a first and second set of states indicated by the first and second
3 subset of the set of per-alignment state machines and writing the updated first set of states to
4 the first subset of per-alignment state machines and the updated second set of states to the
5 second subset of per-alignment state machines.

1 42. (Once Amended) The computer implemented method of claim 40 wherein the sync
2 hunting includes updating the first and second set of states and writing the updated first set of
3 states to the first subset of per-alignment state machines and the updated second set of states
4 to the second subset of per-alignment state machines.

1 46. (Once Amended) The computer implemented method of claim 44 wherein the sync
2 hunting includes updating the first and second set of states and writing the updated first set of
3 states to the first subset of per-alignment state machines and the updated second set of states
4 to the second subset of per-alignment state machines.